







"Today, I'm making decisions to balance aspects of my life that are in line with my intent." —Mallika Chopra



Mallika Chopra, with her husband, Sumant Mandal, and their two daughters, Leela and Tara, in Los Angeles for a book-signing in 2005.

present is taking a moment to be aware of your surroundings and then be a part of that," Deepak says. Notice "your breathing, sensations in your body and all the beauty around you, because even in the midst of chaos there are beautiful colors and smells and tastes and surroundings."

A Different Perspective

"My experience and path is very different from my father's because as a mom with two kids I'm always rushing to a class or soccer practice or doing something," Mallika says. "So my journey included writing my book, which helped me realize the importance of committing to many of the practices that we learned growing up. To really thinking about intent and developing a joyful acceptance of living in the moment and what I'm doing every day.

"I was always asking, 'Am I doing enough?' and 'What can I do to be more successful?' whether as a daughter, mother, wife or in my career," Mallika says.

Ultimately, she realized that while goals and ambition are important, other successes are just as meaningful. And there's no shame in following your heart's passionate intent.

"My intention is to be a good mother and to build a good, strong family that's connected, and to empower my girls. Even though the busyness is still there, there's still some anchoring in the journey when you come at life from a place of intent."

"I have constantly struggled with 'Do I work or do I stay home,'" she says. "The more I listened to what my intents are and what I wanted, the more I realized that we can make empowered choices that vary at different times in our life. Today I'm serving my family and that is what makes me happy. So I don't have to get stuck in worries about career or other success because right now, today, I'm making decisions to balance aspects of my life that are in line with my intent."

Quick to offer his fatherly support, Deepak stresses "motherhood is a very sacred and very amazing career. It is an important leadership role because you are bringing up a citizen of the planet."

Awareness by Example

Motherhood had a profound impact on Mallika's path to intent. Five months pregnant with her first daughter on September 11, 2001, Mallika, her mother, father and brother were all scheduled to travel on different flights. For a few hours, the family believed Gotham may have been on one of the planes terrorists flew into the World Trade Center. She later learned he was safe, but a shaken Mallika asked herself why she was bringing a precious soul into a world filled with hatred and pain.

She turned to the family tradition of asking the important questions: "Who am I, what do I come from, and what do I want to do with my life? What do I want to teach my children?" Those questions helped her realize that if she knew who she was—and was confident in her intent—she could teach her children

resilience and how to contribute to making their world a better place.

"The motto that we follow in our life is 'Teach by example, not just by words,'" Mallika says. "So, if I want my children to meditate and have peace and anchoring experiences in their lives, then I need to do those things, too."

Mallika says she tries to meditate regularly, every afternoon when her daughters come home from school. "That is what my mother did when my brother and I were growing up."

She acknowledges it's not always easy to pass on family traditions.

"My younger daughter will always meditate with me, but my teenager is often too busy. She wants to listen to her music or talk to a friend, and so I may push a little once in a while, but I don't force her. That wouldn't be helpful to anyone. She needs to find her own intent."

Mind Over Matter

Deepak and Mallika are often asked how to begin meditating, especially when technology and the demands of a fast-paced life make it difficult to quiet the mind.

"Meditation to bring about a sense of the present does not have to be complex or formal," Deepak says. "If you are diligent in sitting down for say 20 minutes, or even less, with your eyes closed either doing nothing or watching your breath and noticing the sensations in your body, then you're meditating."

Instead of worrying about learning—or perfecting a technique—both
Chopras encourage meditation
practitioners to just be open to
awareness. And to be patient.

"If you give it the time, it takes over," Deepak says.